

# Help preserve Los Altos Hills' open space



Photo by Saul Chakin

...the future is in your hands.

## The LAH Citizens' Open Space Initiative protects Los Altos Hills' open space.

- The Citizens' Initiative provides real and long-term protection to open space and public recreation lands.
- The Citizens' Initiative readopts existing land use designations and amends those that are currently inappropriate, bringing the General Plan into accordance with the intent of Town residents.
- The Citizens' Initiative prevents the sale or redesignation of Town-owned open space without voter approval.
- The Citizens' Initiative protects 157 of the Town's 168 acres of open space, omitting only the 11 acres that include the Town Hall, Heritage House and a handful of very small parcels, almost all of which are either already developed or undevelopable.
- The Citizens' Initiative is legally sound. Carefully crafted with professional legal advice from Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger LLP, it brings the Town's land use designations into accordance with intended use, and into compliance with State law.

## The Council's Ballot Measure does not adequately protect the Town's open space.

- The Council's Measure allows the Town to develop certain public open space and recreation lands.
- The Council's Measure locks in inappropriate General Plan designations that are inconsistent with current and intended land uses.
- The Council's Measure prohibits proper redesignation of current open space lands without a vote of Town residents.
- The Council's Measure claims to protect 11 additional acres of Town-owned property, none of which adds usable open space or public recreation land.
- The Council's Measure is open to legal challenge, because it acts without amending the Town's General Plan, and uses a method that the California Supreme Court has found invalid.

## Our public open spaces are under threat.

In spring 2002, several Town Council members raised the idea of selling some of Los Altos Hills' public open space properties to raise funds for the Town.

Acting to protect our public open spaces, residents of Los Altos Hills drafted an initiative (the "**LAH Citizens' Open Space Initiative**") to protect open space. In response, the Town Council quickly put forth a much weaker alternative proposal (the "**Council's Ballot Measure**") that actually threatens open space.



Photo by Robert Hill

Parcel	Citizens' Open Space Initiative	Council's Ballot Measure
Juan Prado Mesa Preserve	Redesignated as <b>Open Space Preserve</b> .*	Retains current inappropriate designation as <b>Residential</b> and <b>RA zoning</b> . #
Rhus Ridge Properties	Redesignated as <b>Open Space Preserve</b> .*	Retains current inappropriate designation as <b>Residential</b> .
Murietta Ridge	Redesignated as <b>Open Space Preserve</b> .*	Retains current inappropriate designation as <b>Private Recreation</b> and <b>RA zoning</b> . #
Edith Park	Redesignated as <b>Public Recreation</b> .	Retains current inappropriate designation as <b>Residential</b> and <b>RA zoning</b> . #
Westwind Community Barn	Redesignated as <b>Public Recreation</b> .	Retains current inappropriate designation as <b>Private Recreation</b> .
Byrne Preserve, Central Drive, & O'Keefe Property	All retain proper designation as <b>Open Space Preserve</b> . *	All retain proper designation as <b>Open Space Preserve</b> .*
Little League Fields	Retains proper designation as <b>Public Recreation</b> .	Retains proper designation as <b>Public Recreation</b> .

\* **Open Space Preserve** is the most protective General Plan designation and allows only passive open space uses, agricultural uses, horticultural preserves, grazing, forest preserves and other open space uses. **Under the Citizen's Initiative, these lands cannot be developed or sold without voter approval.**

# **RA Zoning**, or Residential-Agriculture, allows a wide variety of development and conditional uses, including libraries, churches, day care homes, antennas, schools, and police and fire stations. **These lands cannot be sold without voter approval, but under the Council's Ballot Measure, these lands can be developed by the Town.**



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# Only one of these proposals truly protects open space.

## The Citizen's Open Space Initiative protects our open space

It's time to ensure that our public assets can't be developed at the whim of the Town Council.

The Citizens' Open Space Initiative has been endorsed by the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and Committee for Green Foothills.

## The Council's Ballot Measure threatens open space

In response to the Citizens' Initiative, Council members hastily drafted an alternative proposal, which is seriously flawed. Under the Council's proposed Ballot Measure, some of these public lands could be developed — by the City — without voter approval.

The current Town Council proposes to confuse voters by placing their much weaker proposal on the ballot.

## What are the Town Council's objectives?

Land use decisions shouldn't be about this year's Town Council budget. They should protect the long-term interests of the Town.

The proposal put forth by the Town Council is misleading, will confuse voters and could create expensive and time-consuming special elections.

The Council could — and should — adopt the "real" open space initiative, the LAH Citizens' Open Space Initiative, and protect these valued lands for future generations.

## The future of Los Altos Hills' open space is in your hands.

- Sign the petition to qualify the **Los Altos Hills Citizens' Initiative for Open Space** for the ballot.
- Let the Town Council know that you want them to adopt the Citizens' Initiative and provide real open space protections without a special election.
- Learn more, and support the organizations working for real open space protections. For information, visit [www.GreenFoothills.org](http://www.GreenFoothills.org), [www.SCVAS.org](http://www.SCVAS.org), and [www.LAHOOpenSpace.com](http://www.LAHOOpenSpace.com).

The **Citizen's Initiative** is not on the November 2002 ballot, but it is important. You may be asked to vote on it in the future.

The Town of Los Altos Hills has always been dedicated to sound land use and the preservation of open space. Those who incorporated the Town in 1956 were dedicated to the "preservation of the rural atmosphere of the foothills and orderly and unhurried growth."

We are fortunate that our founders had this vision, and that the Town now holds some 160 acres of public open space.

These lands provide significant environmental, scenic, and recreational benefits to the entire community, and their preservation is critical to ensure the continued quality of life and unique character of the Town of Los Altos Hills.



Photo by Jitze Couperus



[www.SCVAS.org](http://www.SCVAS.org)  
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by the Committee for Green Foothills and the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, two nonprofit organizations working to protect local open space and habitats.



[www.GreenFoothills.org](http://www.GreenFoothills.org)  
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